

## **OBJECTIVE 13: EMERGENCY INFORMATION - RUMOR CONTROL**

### **OBJECTIVE**

Demonstrate the capability to establish and operate rumor control in a coordinated and timely manner.

### **INTENT**

This objective is derived from NUREG-0654 which provides that OROs should have the capability to deal with rumors in a coordinated manner. (See evaluation criteria from Planning Standards G. and N.)

Rumor control provides a means for OROs to effectively undertake the following actions: respond to calls from the general public, monitor the effectiveness of Emergency Broadcast System (EBS) messages and other forms of notification to the public, and take corrective measures through the use of EBS or other disseminations to the public and media to dispel false or misleading rumors that could interfere with implementation of protective action recommendations (PAR).

### **DEMONSTRATION CRITERIA**

<u>NUREG</u>	<u>CRITERION</u>
--------------	------------------

<b>G.4.a.,b.,c.</b>	<b>1. Rumor control staff responds promptly and accurately to calls.</b>
---------------------	--

#### **Explanation**

Responsible OROs should demonstrate the capability to receive numerous simultaneous telephone calls from the general public and respond to questions or comments. Designated rumor control staff should demonstrate the capability to provide accurate information to callers regarding the status of the developing emergency and protective actions that should be taken. Rumor control staff should be able to refer callers to the appropriate information source or to provide information on a call back basis when answers are not immediately known or available. Rumor control staff also should have current information about the emergency and be able to obtain additional information promptly when needed to answer specific questions.

## Extent of Play

Under this criterion, the rumor control operation should be set up as in an actual emergency. Rumor control staff should demonstrate the function by responding to simulated calls from the public. Simulated calls should be made by control cell personnel. Each member of the rumor control staff should respond to an average of at least six calls per hour throughout the emergency phase.

### NUREG

### CRITERION

**G.4.a.,c.            2.    Measures are taken to control the spread of rumors that threaten to have adverse impact on adherence to protective action recommendations.**

## Explanation

Responsible OROs should demonstrate the capability to identify major inconsistencies in public understanding of the developing emergency and the PARs. Staff should be able to identify trends in rumors (e.g., frequently expressed false or misleading information) from the general public that could impede adherence to official instructions regarding PARs.

Responsible OROs should demonstrate the capability to monitor the contents of broadcast media coverage of the emergency situation and determine if any of the information provided to the public could contribute to the spread of false rumors or misleading information.

Responsible OROs should demonstrate the capability to provide information on rumor trends to staff responsible for provision of information to the public and the media. The information provided should reflect data gathered from the analysis of both the calls made to the rumor control staff and monitoring of the media. The Public Affairs Official(s) (PAO) or staff should demonstrate the capability to use this information to develop public information messages with content that counters rumors (See Objective 11, Public Instructions and Emergency Information.). The media staff should demonstrate the capability to use this information in subsequent disseminations to the media. (See Objective 12, Emergency Information - Media)

## Extent of Play

Under this criterion, all rumor control activities related to individual calls to the rumor control staff should be conducted as they would be in an actual emergency. All activities associated with the monitoring of broadcast media should be simulated by responses to controller injects concerning media coverage of the emergency. At least one message should contain a false or misleading rumor for which measures should be taken.

Equipment that would be used in the monitoring of news coverage in an actual emergency should be on hand and operable. When actual EBS test messages are disseminated in conjunction with an exercise, the broadcast should be monitored by staff at the media center or by rumor control staff. When no actual broadcast is made, the radios and television equipment should be tested for operability and staff should demonstrate the capability to monitor area EBS stations.

## NUREG

## CRITERION

- N.1.a.**                      **3.    All activities described in the demonstration criteria for this objective are carried out in accordance with the plan, unless deviations are provided for in the extent-of-play agreement.**

### **Explanation**

Responsible OROs should demonstrate the capability to follow policies, implement procedures, and utilize equipment and facilities contained in their plans and procedures. OROs should demonstrate that they can follow sequences outlined in the various procedures and perform specified activities, as necessary.

### **Extent of Play**

Under this criterion, all activities should be carried out as specified in the plan, unless deviation from the plan is provided for in the extent-of-play agreement.

## **CLARIFICATION OF TERMS**

**Control cell** refers to exercise personnel who facilitate interfaces with nonparticipating groups, such as State and local government officials and special needs populations.

**Controller inject** refers to the introduction of events, data, and information into exercises to drive the demonstration of objectives.

**Emergency information** refers to material designed to improve public knowledge or understanding of an emergency.

**Emergency phase** refers to the initial phase of response actions, during which actions are taken in response to a threat of release or a release in progress.

**Rumors** refers to information circulated by individuals and organizations during an

emergency that may or may not be true. (Usually, rumors originate and are spread on an ad hoc, not official basis.)